

The Small Business Assistance Program Says...

SBAP Q & A

The SBAP was mandated by the federal 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments to help small businesses understand and comply with environmental regulations. Many small businesses do not know what laws affect them. Dick Lehr, SBAP Engineer Manager, says, "They should never have any unanswered questions about environmental laws. All they need to do is call us."

Who can qualify for this assistance?

- Have 100 employees or less;
- Not be a major source of emissions;
- Does not emit 50 tons or more per year of any regulated pollutant; and
- Emits less than 75 tons per year of all regulated pollutants.

What assistance can you expect from the SBAP?

- Interpretation of complex federal and state regulations in all environmental media and guidance on how to comply with them;
- Interpret the rights and obligations of small businesses;
- Identify emission sources and pollutants;
- Estimate emissions at each source for inventory questionnaires;
- Assist in the preparation of environmental permit applications and exemptions; and
- Develop pollution prevention and risk management plans.

Where can you get this assistance?

Small business assistance is available at all DEQ regional offices:

- Northwest Regional Office, Shreveport (318) 676-5088 (Larry Lashey)
- Northeast Regional Office, Monroe (318) 676-5088 (Larry Lashley)
- Southwest Regional Office, Lake Charles (337) 475-8690 (Lance Martin)
- Acadiana Regional Office, Lafayette (337) 262-5591 (Leah Roger)
- Southeast Regional Office, New Orleans (504) 736-7766 (Loni Gaudet and Bob Wasconick)
- Capital Regional Office, Baton Rouge (225) 765-0167 (Chris Mayeux)

How do you contact the SBAP?

You can call the regional office in the area in which your business is located and discuss your issue with the technical advisor in that region. If your question cannot be fully answered on the telephone, the technical advisor will visit your facility and work with you to determine what is necessary for you to be in compliance. You may also call the SBAP hotline 1-800-259-2890 and your request for help will be transferred to the appropriate region.

When should you contact the SBAP?

New business: Contact the SBAP during the early planning stage, especially before any construction begins.

Existing business: Any existing business that emits any regulated air pollutants, hazardous or solid waste, or contaminated water, must have a permit or an exemption.

Why should a small business call on the SBAP for assistance?

It is mandatory that all small businesses be in complete compliance with all environmental regulations including record keeping and reporting. Failure to comply with any aspect of the regulations could result in penalties, depending on the severity of the violation.

The SBAP also has a program to help small businesses go beyond compliance by requesting a pollution prevention opportunity assessment audit. In this program, an engineer or a team of engineers will visit your site, and after carefully examining your facilities, will recommend how you can reduce your emissions. In many cases, the reduction of emissions also means a reduction in costs.

"Don't Fuss, Just Call Us"



Left to right, SBAP's Jim Friloux, Patrick Devillier, Bob Wasconick, Dick Lehr, Larry Lashley, Loni Gaudet and Chris Mayeux stand at the entrance of the International Workboat Show in New Orleans where they gave a small business assistance presentation and staffed a booth.

DEQ's Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP) provides technical assistance to help small businesses stay in compliance with both federal and state environmental regulations. Dick Lehr, SBAP Engineer Manager, says, "People tell us that we are the best-kept secret in the state." The SBAP functions may involve a phone call to answer a simple question, or a trip to a facility site for a compliance consultation.

For example, Lehr said a small business owner in New Orleans called DEQ and asked for assistance. "Just in the preliminary stages of housekeeping, we saved him about \$20,000 a year," Lehr said. The SBAP saved the owner another \$20,000 by designing a piece of equipment for him that also eliminated tons of pollution.

SBAP Compliance Advisory Panel (CAP)

The CAP consists of eight members selected by the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Department of Economic Development, and the Department of Environmental Quality. The CAP oversees the operation of the SBAP and reports annually to the EPA on the performance of the SBAP.

SBAP Ombudsman or Advocate for Small Businesses

Should a small business feel that they have been mistreated by DEQ or EPA, they may call the Ombudsman who will investigate the complaint and assist in achieving a fair settlement. The Ombudsman may be reached at (225) 765-0735 or 1-800-259-2890.

The SBAP maintains a web page located on the DEQ web site under the Environmental Assistance Division. Some of the items on the web page are the SBAP quarterly newsletter, regulations, contacts for SBAP assistance and links to federal assistance programs.

www.deq.state.la.us/assistance//sbap/index.htm

If you have any doubt about your compliance with state or federal environmental regulations, don't hesitate to call a local SBAP technical advisor in the DEQ regional offices. The goal of the Louisiana SBAP, as a non-enforcement activity, is to help small business comply with the environmental regulations and be the best program in the nation. ♻️

** SBAP Testimonials **

In the eight years that the SBAP has been in existence, DEQ has assisted thousands of small businesses. Here are some of their comments:

- "Lance did an excellent job in all aspects. His knowledge and patience in assisting us was impeccable. I am very thankful for the SBAP and Lance for their guidance." -a steel company
- "Thank you very much for the assistance given by Loni Gaudet. She is very knowledgeable and I could not have applied for permits without her assistance." -an engineering company

- "Leah Roger went above and beyond what I expected. She was helpful in assisting us in applying for our air permits. Having Leah Roger part of the DEQ team is a great asset not only to the DEQ organization, but she is also an asset to the small businesses of Louisiana." -a shipyard company
- "Please keep helpful employees like Mr. Lashley informed and available to those of us who may need assistance and may not truly understand what is expected of us." -an animal hospital